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LETTER DATED 24 JANUARY 1992 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GERMANY TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I refer to your conversation yesterday with Foreign Minister Genscher in which he expressed the deep concern of the German Government about the danger of a proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, especially of the possible illegal spread and misuse of know-how concerning their development and production. The German Government deems it important that all States Members of the United Nations join in a collective effort to address this growing threat to international peace and security. It is essential that our efforts take full advantage of the expertise and energy of all Member States and that they be based on a wide consensus.

Allow me to summarize the three proposals which Minister Genscher suggested the United Nations explore:

- To create incentives for scientists and experts currently involved in the development or production of weapons of mass destruction to use their knowledge for peaceful purposes. Specifically, an international foundation for peaceful technology could be established, offering them employment, research or training contracts.

- To invite Member States to enact strict domestic legislation banning the participation of their nationals in the development or production of the weapons of mass destruction - whether at home or abroad. The German Parliament has just enacted new and stricter laws providing for criminal prosecution of German nationals participating in any such activities. An international convention could be elaborated whose parties would undertake to enact similar domestic legislation.

- To enact sanctions against States that try to procure the material or the technology for weapons of mass destruction. The only body empowered to do that is the United Nations Security Council. The Council could take up the matter of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as a threat to international peace and security. In a

resolution, the Security Council could embrace the above-mentioned and possible further elements of the initiative and could, in particular, declare that breaches of the obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons or comparable obligations of international law constitute a threat to international peace and security against which the Security Council will impose adequate sanctions.

I would greatly appreciate it if you could arrange for this letter to be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Detlev GRAF ZU RANTZAU
Ambassador